



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP

### 2017/2018 Professional Development Fellowships (PDF)

For Spouses and Partners of Direct-hire U.S. Government Employees

Under Chief of Mission (COM) Authority

#### Summary

The U.S. Department of State and the Family Liaison Office (FLO) are pleased to announce the Professional Development Fellowship (PDF) program for 2017/2018. Applications for PDFs are due by May 1, 2017. Open to spouses and partners of direct-hire U.S. government employees from all agencies serving overseas under COM authority, PDFs support spouses and partners in their efforts to maintain, enhance, and/or develop their professional skills while overseas. Subject to budgetary constraints, PDFs from \$1,000 up to \$2,500 will be awarded on a reimbursable basis for enrichment activities. Selectees will self-fund a minimum of twenty-five percent of the activity upon which the PDF is based. In order to ensure full consideration of their application, those interested in applying should read this cable carefully and in its entirety.

#### Program Considerations

The total amount awarded during this program period will be subject to budgetary constraints. The 2017/2018 program will have a minimum individual PDF amount of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$2,500. The selection committee will not consider incomplete or late applications or requests below the minimum amount requirement. **The 2017/2018 PDF period will cover activities that commence on or after August 1, 2017, and conclude no later than July 31, 2018.** Please note that the Department will not reimburse activities that are undertaken before and after the dates announced in this cable.

#### Eligibility

Applicants must be the spouse or partner of a direct-hire U.S. government employee ("sponsor") assigned to and residing at an overseas post under COM authority during the fellowship period. "Partner" for the purpose of this announcement includes same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners who may or may not be on orders. Applicants must be accompanying their sponsor to post or otherwise residing overseas as covered by "b" below.

- a. PDF selectees must reside overseas during the 2017-2018 PDF period. If they temporarily return to the United States, they may continue their PDF activities while in the United States; however, such period shall not exceed one month. If the period in the US exceeds one month, the selectee will need to inform FLO, complete the PDF activities as soon as possible or alternatively return overseas to resume the PDF activities until completion. If the PDF recipient will be in transition between two posts during the 2017 – 2018 PDF period, the activities must commence only when the selectee starts residing overseas.

- b. Spouses and partners of those employees on domestic assignments, on TDY exceeding one month in the United States, in training in the United States, or who are on unaccompanied tours but are residing in the United States during the fellowship period are not eligible to apply.
- c. Applicants who have received a previous PDF who meet the eligibility requirements may apply again. However, applicants who have received fellowships for the two previous consecutive program periods must wait one program period before reapplying.

## Application Procedures

- a. Applicants should submit a completed application form, which can be requested by following the instructions found on the [FLO's website](#).
- b. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the application is complete and submitted on time. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. Applications with missing information after the deadline has passed will be considered incomplete.
- c. Applications must contain a synopsis followed by a detailed description of the proposed professional development activities.
- d. The proposed activities must take place during the PDF program period, i.e., on or after August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018.
- e. Professional development activities should be directly related to the applicant's professional interests and the proposal must explain how the activities will enhance the applicant's skills and/or future employment potential.
- f. Proposals may include a wide range of activities including, but not limited to, classroom and distance learning courses, obtaining or renewing professional and language certifications or licenses, and participation in professional conferences.
- g. Budgeted proposals should provide a detailed, itemized breakdown of the entire cost of the proposed activity. If the provider of the proposed activity has not yet published updated costs for the PDF program year, the most recently published costs must be used in the application. Award amounts are determined and limited by the amounts listed in the application. Applications should be limited to eight (8) pages.
- h. All complete applications received by the deadline of May 1, 2017, will be acknowledged by email. Depending upon the volume of applications received, processing and emailing of notification of receipt may take up to three weeks after the deadline.
- i. Applicants will not receive an email acknowledgment if the application is received after the deadline.

## Application Deadline

Applications should be submitted to FLO as soon as possible, but no later than **Monday, May 1, 2017, 11:59(ET)**, and must be transmitted electronically to **FLOAskPDF2017-2018@state.gov**. Applicants will be notified of results by late July 2017, after PDF committees have convened.

## Reimbursement of Allowable Costs

Fellowship costs will be reimbursed after the 2017/2018 PDF activity is completed and the selectee submits documentation for reimbursement. Funds will be deposited to the designated selectee's U.S. bank account within eight weeks of receipt of the completed reimbursement request. The Department is unable to deposit fellowships in installments or on behalf of the selectee to a third party. The selectee should claim reimbursement only after the activity is fully complete.

Allowable costs can be approved from \$1,000 up to \$2,500. The selectee will be responsible for at least 25 percent of the proposed allowable costs. Under no circumstances can PDF amounts be increased after an applicant is selected; however, the amount reimbursed may be less, reflecting actual costs. Reimbursable costs for activities must be for the originally approved activities with the corresponding itemized breakdown as listed on the application. Activities not explicitly approved by the PDF committee will not be reimbursed. Modification to any component of the approved project must be pre-approved. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that only allowable costs are included in their application and, if selected for a PDF, that the costs mirror the approved project.

If an application is approved, FLO will accept prepaid invoices on or after April 1, 2017, provided the activities start overseas on or after August 1st. Selectees must ensure that invoices identify them as the recipients.

## Non-Allowable Costs

- Membership fees and subscription costs
- Travel
- Transportation
- Lodging
- Per diem
- Child care
- Startup and business costs
- Hardware or equipment
- Any costs not included in the approved PDF application

## Selection Committee

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee chaired by FLO and will include representatives from the respective regional bureau to which the sponsoring employee is assigned and the Office of Overseas Employment.

## Selection Criteria

The selection committee will consider the following criteria:

- a. Lack of availability of employment options in the applicant's profession at her/his current post of assignment.
- b. Correlation between the proposed activity and professional development of the applicant.
- c. Where applicable, a connection between the proposed activity and other effort(s) on the part of the applicant to maintain/refresh her/his professional skills (e.g., the proposal can be part of a larger professional development plan).
- d. Favorable consideration will be given to those activities that will benefit overseas communities under COM authority through provision of services that are otherwise not readily available and/or are in great demand.
- e. Proposals from applicants residing at Historically Difficult to Staff (HDS) posts will receive favorable consideration as will proposals from posts where no Bilateral Work Agreement or *de facto* Work Arrangement are in place. A list of HDS posts follows at the end of this cable; the link to the Bilateral and *de facto* list follows: [www.state.gov/documents/organization/133570.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/133570.pdf).

## Project Completion

PDF selectees' activities must commence and be completed during the 2017/2018 fellowship program period, i.e., on or after August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018. There will be no extensions and no exceptions to this requirement. Selectees must submit a project report describing program activities and accomplishments. Additionally selectees must provide a financial report with detailed accounting of the project and related expenses corresponding to the approved items. PDF selectees will receive specific instructions on project completion requirements will be sent to.

## Withdrawal from the Program

The Fellowships awarded through this program constitute a financial commitment on the part of the Department. It is imperative that applicants accepting a PDF understand this commitment and, should they decide to not complete their approved PDF activity, notify FLO as soon as possible but no later than January 5, 2018. Notifying FLO by this date will allow FLO to offer the available funds to another applicant within a reasonable timeframe. Selectees who do NOT notify FLO by January 5, 2018, will not be considered for the next two consecutive PDF program periods. Selectees who withdraw in case of force majeure (e.g., evacuation, serious illness, leaving the Foreign Service) need to contact FLO as soon as possible. Each request will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

## Points of Contact

For additional information please consult the [FLO website](#) and be sure to read through the frequently asked questions (FAQs). For questions not answered on the website, email [FLOAskPDF2017-2018@state.gov](mailto:FLOAskPDF2017-2018@state.gov) or call FLO at (202) 647-1076.

PDF program updates will be announced via the CLO network at posts worldwide, FLO Weekly, *The Network*, FLO's email subscription service for registered family members, and on the FLO Facebook page. FLO encourages all PDF applicants to subscribe to the FLO Weekly. To register, please email your request with your name, personal email address, your employee sponsor's name and their agency affiliation to **FLOPublication@state.gov**.

## **Historically Difficult to Staff (HDS) Posts Summer 2017**

### **AF HDS Posts:**

Abidjan, Abuja, Asmara, Bamako, Bangui, Banjul, Brazzaville, Bujumbura, Conakry, Cotonou, Djibouti, Douala, Freetown, Juba, Khartoum, Kinshasa, Lagos, Libreville, Luanda, Malabo, , Monrovia, Ndjamena, Niamey, Nouakchott, Ouagadougou, Yaounde

### **EAP HDS Posts**

Port Moresby, Shenyang, Wuhan

### **EUR HDS Posts**

Vladivostok,

### **NEA HDS Posts**

Baghdad, Basrah, Cairo, Erbil, Manama, Jeddah, Kuwait, Sana'a, Tripoli, Tunis

### **SCA HDS Posts**

Almaty, Herat, Islamabad, Kabul, Karachi, Lahore, Mazar I Sharif, Peshawar

### **WHA HDS Posts**

Ciudad Juarez, Hermosillo, Matamoros, Nogales, Nuevo Laredo, Port-au-Prince